Frida
2011? - May 21, 2026

APRIL 11, 2025

sweet old dog
whimpers at the closed slider
that separates her
from the backyard
“Don’t worry, Mrs. Dog”,
I say as, leaning over her,
I open it

she stares outside a moment
then turns around and
limps past me
back into the living room,
forgetting, apparently,
why she wanted out
in the first place

A SONNET FOR FRIDA

To love a dog you must prepare for loss.
A life lived so much faster than your own.
I wonder as I watch her lick her paws
When she'll no longer quiver for a bone.

Her short white coat grows even thinner now.
Her raw pink skin is showing underneath.
I see confusion grow in her by how
She'll wolf a treat, and nip me with her teeth.

Some days her tail still wags to see me there
And eyes shine bright with loyalty and love.
But days there are she doesn't seem to care
And sleep is all she can't get enough of.

She taught me love for dogs, but I was not
Prepared by her for this, her parting shot.

BECAUSE WE WERE YOURS AND LOVED YOU SO

I

Chasing you around the yard
when you wouldn't come in at night
Watching you lie in the sun
with your best friend, Scout the cat
Your headbutts when a hand
stopped stroking or scratching
The way you always stood still
right where we needed to go
and gave that look of 'What?'

II

We'd been spoiling you for months
(because we were yours and loved you so)
We'd seen it coming
back legs already useless
now the front ones giving out
Rose would lift you when
your quivering tail signaled
a need to go. Lovingly
she carried your shit away
to flush in the little room you
always seemed so puzzled by

That last night, all your favorites
(because we were yours and loved you so)
cheese, burger, chicken & rice
shrimp tails, your favorite most of all
All the head scritches
All the rubs in all the right spots
All the hugs & kisses we could give
still not enough

That last day, the family
(because we were yours and loved you so)
gathered around you, except for
Maxwell, too uncomfortable to stay
The gentle veterinarian came to us
when time had come
we wanted you at home
Always so good at getting shots
you barely noticed the sedative
passed peacefully to sleep
and then—no pain

III

Now there's a gap in our lives
a space where you used to be
Every day we think of you still
Time will ease the ache we know
But we will not forget your love